

Nancy A. Thornberry

Nancy A. Thornberry is Senior Vice President and Franchise Head, Diabetes and Obesity, for Merck & Co. Inc. In this role, she leads discovery and clinical research in metabolic disorders such as diabetes and obesity. Nancy initiated and led Merck's dipeptidyl peptidase 4 (DPP-4) project, which resulted in the discovery of JANUVIA® for the treatment of Type 2 diabetes.

Nancy began her career with Merck Research Laboratories in 1979 as a biochemist and has served in many roles of increasing responsibility. She has held her current position since November 2009. In her tenure at Merck, she has achieved many notable scientific accomplishments, including the identification of the first caspase, interleukin-1 β converting enzyme (ICE/caspase 1) as the cysteine protease responsible for IL-1 β processing in monocytes.

She has also developed a novel approach involving positional scanning substrate combinatorial libraries for analysis of protease specificities.

Nancy has been awarded the Merck Presidential Fellowship for her outstanding achievements in drug discovery and development. In 2007, she received the Merck Directors Award, the highest and most prestigious award at Merck, for her role in the Januvia project.